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## EGYPT | CSW congratulates President Mursi, urges him to uphold civil and religious liberties

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Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW) congratulates the people of Egypt on the appointment of their first democratically elected president, Mohammed Mursi, and welcomes his statements in favor of an inclusive government. CSW also urges President Mursi to uphold civil and religious liberties in his new administration.

In his first speech as the newly-elected President of Egypt, Mr. Mursi encouraged national unity across the religious divide by stating that "Muslims and Christians are advocates of civilization and construction." He also pledged "respect for human rights, maintaining rights of women and children" and said: "Egypt is for all Egyptians; all of us are equals in terms of rights."

As an active member of the Muslim Brotherhood movement for many years, Mr. Mursi was arrested and imprisoned for short periods on several occasions by government of Hosni Mubarak. He became President of the Freedom and Justice Party, the political party of the Muslim Brotherhood, after the revolution that began on January 25.

Mr. Mursi gained 51.7 percent of the votes cast during the presidential elections, while his opponent Ahmed Shafiq won 48.3 percent. Since his election, the Muslim Brotherhood has announced that Mr. Mursi will no longer have an active role in the organization.

Mr. Mursi has promised to be a president for all Egyptians and to appoint a prime minister who is not affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood, as well as a Christian vice-president. However, concerns persist over the influence the group may still wield on government. The party has already reneged on several pledges made since the Revolution, including a promise not to field a Presidential candidate. As the dominant party in parliament, the Muslim Brotherhood also attempted to dominate the committee drafting the new constitution.

It is also not yet clear how much power Mr. Mursi will actually wield after the Supreme Council of Armed Forces (SCAF) dissolved parliament and passed legislation in the last week granting itself sweeping powers to limit the powers of the president, who will not have control of the army. Egypt still does not have a new constitution to define the president's powers or duties. SCAF has also issued a decree granting itself legislative power and reinforcing its role in the drafting of the new constitution. As parliament is dissolved, it is not yet clear where Mr. Mursi will take his oath of office.

CSW's Chief Executive Mervyn Thomas said, "CSW congratulates the Egyptian people on the election of their first democratically elected president. We particularly welcome Mr. Mursi's stated commitment to equality of citizenship regardless of creed, age and gender, and urge him to follow through his encouraging statements on inclusive government for Egypt with actions that support democracy, rule of law and equality before the law for all Egyptians, regardless of religious or political affiliation."